

## City of Austin's Salamander Research Program:

### Status and Need for Expansion

**Status:** The City currently maintains a temporary salamander research facility at the University of Texas' Animal Resources Center. With over 100 Barton Springs and Austin blind salamanders in two 75-square foot rooms, this facility has reached its maximum capacity. The City's 10(a)(1)(B) permit to operate and maintain Barton Springs Pool requires the City to maintain a viable captive breeding population of the endangered Barton Springs salamander. The recent mortalities of Barton Springs salamanders at Barton Springs underscores the vulnerability of this species and the need for additional safety measures, including captive breeding, to avoid its extinction. The City is also committed to maintaining the recently described Austin blind salamander and hopes to expand the salamander research program to include the Jollyville Plateau salamander.

**Need for a Larger, Permanent Facility:** The City of Austin's salamander biologists are seeking a permanent facility that can support viable captive populations (at least 500 individuals) of each salamander species included in the captive breeding program. In addition to the salamanders, the research facility needs to be expanded to include culturing aquatic plants and invertebrates. Captive-raised plants and invertebrates would be used to supplement salamander cover and food and, if needed, assist with habitat restoration efforts at Barton Springs. Ideally, the facility would be located on City property. Other factors considered in selecting a suitable site include a reliable source of groundwater with water quality similar to Barton Springs, adequate space and infrastructure, security, and potential to expand research and public outreach.

**Benefits of the Austin Nature Center Site:** Of the many potential sites considered (City of Austin Prop 2 lands, Wildflower Research Center, University of Texas Brackenridge Field Laboratory), salamander biologists believe the Austin Nature and Science Center (ANSC) would be the ideal location for a permanent salamander research facility. Benefits of the ANSC site include:

Compatible Missions - The Salamander Research Facility would complement ANSC's ongoing animal care and environmental stewardship programs, providing unique partnering opportunities for ANSC staff and salamander biologists to promote their missions.

Education and Outreach - Partnering with ANSC creates the opportunity to increase public awareness of water quality issues that affect the salamanders, Edwards Aquifer, and urban watersheds. ANSC's central, public location would allow salamander biologists and ANSC staff to work closely together to create interpretive, educational, and outreach programming about these important natural resources. The goal is to provide unbiased and accessible information for the general public to increase awareness of individual and communal stewardship responsibilities and to promote conservation activities.

Research - A successful captive breeding program will require research to identify environmental

July 2002

and physiological triggers and conditions that induce salamander reproduction. With adequate space to conduct research, salamander staff would solicit partnerships with academia to develop reliable captive breeding techniques. The Barton Springs Salamander Conservation Fund, which receives \$45,000 of City revenues each year, would be used to promote scientific research. The Salamander Research Facility would also assist ANSC in obtaining needed research grants.

Adequate Space - Salamander biologists anticipate needing an initial area of about 2000 square feet, to include space for captive breeding, research, and interpretation. Based on ANSC's master plan, this would fit within the footprint of the proposed Oak Knoll Exhibit Center site. Salamander biologists would work with ANSC staff to identify areas of shared space and equipment, such as laboratories, meeting rooms, and exhibit space. The Oak Knoll Exhibit Center site also provides an excellent opportunity to showcase the Green Builder Program.

Infrastructure - The proposed Oak Knoll Exhibit Center site provides immediate access to the ANSC well, which draws from the Edwards Aquifer. It provides access to nearby electric, phone, gas, water and wastewater lines. Extending the wastewater line to the Salamander Research Facility would also service the Asford-McGill House, an historic structure used as a pre-school by ANSC. This would eliminate the existing septic system. Salamander biologists would coordinate with ANSC staff to itemize specific infrastructure needs.

**Funding:** Measure 41 of the City's section 10(a)(1)(B) permit commits the City to designate a staff biologist and dedicate a minimum of \$20,000 annually to the development and maintenance of the captive breeding program. The City has also approved \$154,000.00 in capital costs, such as a structure, utility connections, well maintenance, and equipment. Given limited funding, the facility would need to be developed in phases and expanded as additional funds become available.

**Responsibilities:** WPDR would assume full responsibility for constructing and maintaining the Salamander Research Facility. Responsibilities include providing all permits, funding, construction, maintenance, staffing, and equipment. WPDR would ensure the facility meets all City approvals. WPDR would assume responsibility for and fund any necessary maintenance on the ANSC well. WPDR would routinely sample the well and provide all information regarding the well water to the ANSC staff. WPDR would also be responsible for complying with all federal, state, and local laws, including permits to use the well and endangered species permits to authorize salamander collection, propagation, and salvage. ANSC would retain control over site management, interpretive and educational programming.

**Contact:**

Dee Ann Chamberlain and Lisa O'Donnell, Environmental Scientists

Watershed Protection Department and Development Review

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# 1

MEMORANDUM

To: Parks and Recreation Board

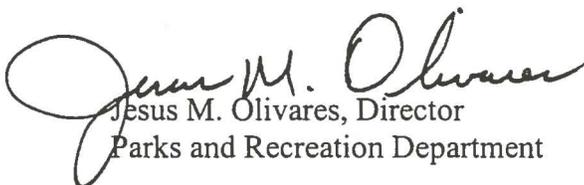
From: Jesus M. Olivares, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department

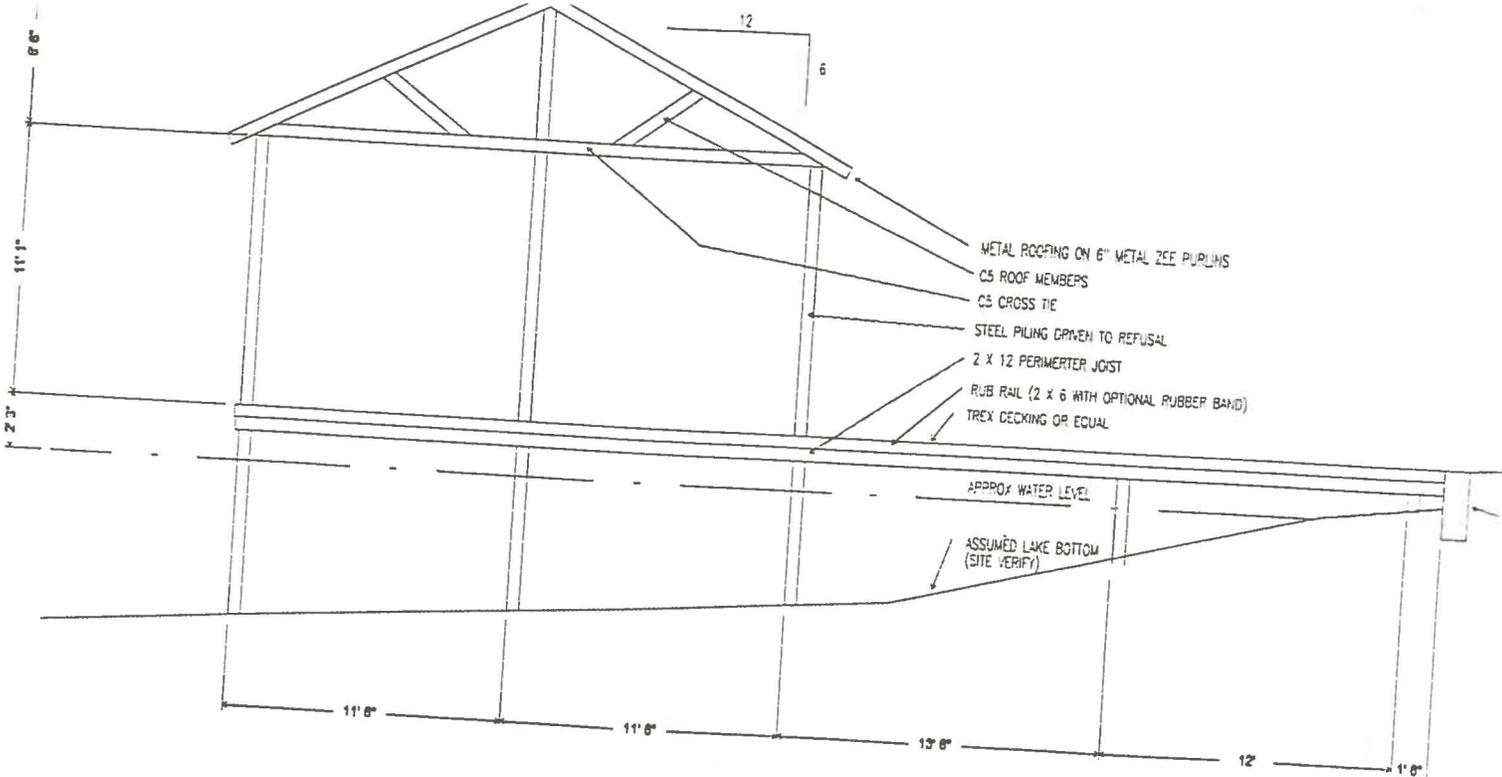
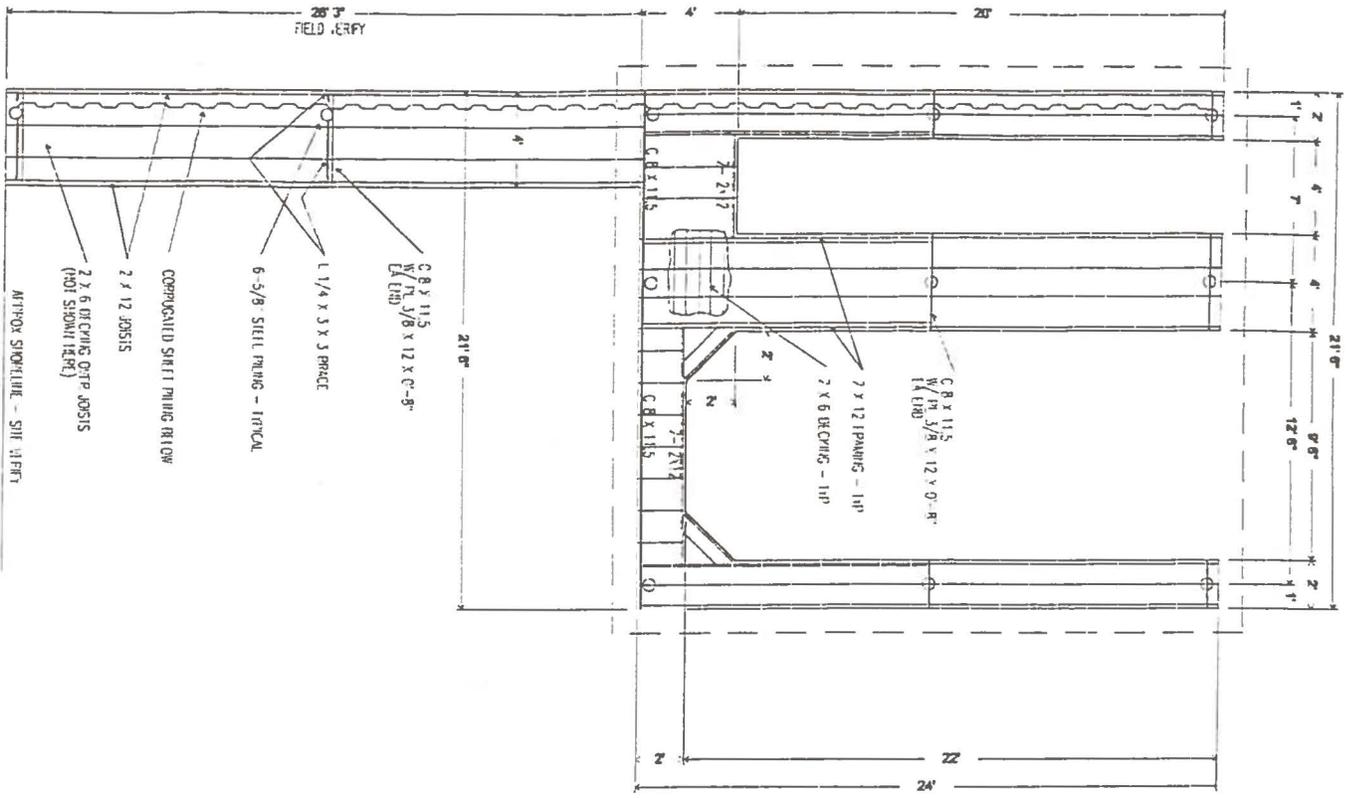
Date: March 11, 2003

Subject: Construction of Jim Boon dock at 5701 Scout Island Cv.  
File No. SP-02-0392DS.

A request was received from Signor Enterprises on the behalf of Jim Boon to remodel an existing boat dock. A Site Plan Exemption was given for the repair of the existing boat dock. No pilings or piers were to be replaced for this would require a site plan. The existing dock was totally removed and a new dock was constructed in the same footprint. All existing pilings were removed and replaced. The property was red tagged on April 19, 2003 for construction without a Site Plan. A Site Plan was submitted to the City in November of 2002.

The Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) staff has reviewed plans for the proposed project and finds they do not meet the requirements of Article XIII, Section 25-2-1176, (Regulations for the Construction of Boat Docks) of the Land Development Code. The new dock extends 50' from the shoreline. A dock may not extend more than 30' from the shoreline unless the Parks and Recreation Board determines that the dock will not create a hazard and approves the construction of the dock. The Parks and Recreation Board shall make a recommendation on the distance a dock can extend without creating a hazard.

  
Jesus M. Olivares, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department



NOTE: SITE VERIFY ALL DIMENSIONS

# DOCK SIDE ELEVATION

SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

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February 27, 2003

Parks and Recreation Board Members  
c/o Mr. Randy Scott  
City of Austin  
Parks and Recreation Department  
200 South Lamar Boulevard  
Austin, TX 78704

RE: Boon Residence Boat Dock  
SP-02-0392DS  
Waiver Request

Dear Board Members:

We are writing as part of our neighbor's application for a site development permit and in support of two waivers he has requested for his boat dock at 5701 Scout Island Cove.

Mr. Boon has requested a waiver from City of Austin Land Development Code Section 25-2-1176 (D) (2), which limits the distance a dock can extend beyond the shoreline to 30 feet. Mr. Boon's dock extends 50 feet from the shoreline; however, the dock was reconstructed in the exact location as the old dock and does not extend further into the lake than the adjacent docks. Mr. Boon's dock does not infringe on access to our boat docks or navigation of the lake. Therefore, we would support the Board granting this waiver.

Mr. Boon has also requested waiver from City of Austin Land Development Code Section 25-2-1176 (D) (2), which limits the width of a dock to 20% of the shoreline width of the lot. We understand that Mr. Boon's dock is 21.5 feet wide and exceeds this 20% limit. The dock was reconstructed within the same footprint as the old dock and is much more attractive and structurally sound. The scale of the dock blends well with the adjacent docks. We also support this waiver being granted by the Board.

Sincerely,

  
Eric Teggeman  
5703 Scout Island Cove

  
Doug Monahan  
5700 Scout Island Cove



BAKER-AICKLEN  
& ASSOCIATES, INC.  
Consulting Engineers

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February 28, 2003

Parks and Recreation Board Members  
c/o Randy Scott  
City of Austin  
Parks and Recreation Department  
200 South Lamar Boulevard  
Austin, TX 78704

RE: **Boon Residence Boat Dock**  
**SP-02-0392DS**  
**Waiver Request**

**Board Members:**

Please accept this letter as a request for waiver from City of Austin Land Development Code Sections 25-2-1176 (B) (2) (distance from shoreline) and 25-2-1176 (D) (2) (dock width with respect to shoreline width of lot).

This project consists of reconstructing an existing boat dock, which was listing and in poor condition, for the Boon residence located at 5701 Scout Island Cove. The residence is located on Lot 12, Block B, The Courtyard Phase 2. The boat dock is located on a portion of Lot 14, The Courtyard Phase 3-A, which is a 14.08-acre tract owned by the Courtyard Homeowners Association and is a common area and drainage and public utility easement. Mr. Boon owns the rights to, and use, of a 0.403-acre easement of Lot 14.

Mr. Jim Boon was issued a Site Development Exemption (#02002369) by the City of Austin for repairs to be made to the existing boat dock, which included bringing it into square and replacing rotten wood. According to Mr. Boon, the dock was leaning approximately 15-18 degrees. After attempting to square the dock with a large crane, it was evident the dock could not be squared as several piers were not sunk deep enough to withstand movement. At this point, it was decided to drive new piers and salvage as much of the structure as possible. The pilings were replaced with 7" diameter steel pilings sunk fifteen (15) feet to bedrock. Because not replacing the piers was a condition of the exemption permit, Mr. Boon was red-tagged and informed that a full site development permit was required.

As previously mentioned, the boat dock is located on Lot 14, a common use easement for the subdivision. Mr. Boon owns the rights to a 0.403-acre easement on this lot. The formerly side-mounted jet ski lift was reconfigured to fall within the original dock footprint.

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Boon Residence Boat Dock  
SP-02-0392DS  
Waiver Requests

February 28, 2003  
Page 2 of 2

We respectfully request consideration for a waiver from City of Austin Land Development Code Section 25-2-1176 (B) (2), which states "A dock may not extend more than 30 feet from the shoreline unless the Parks and Recreation Board determines that the dock will not create a hazard and approves the construction of the dock". This waiver is being requested because the dock extends 50 feet beyond the shoreline. As previously mentioned the dock was reconstructed in the same location as the old dock. The dock, as well as adjacent existing docks, extends more than 30 feet beyond the shoreline due to the shallow water depth on that side of the lake. The dock does not extend further into the lake than the adjacent docks and does not create a navigation or safety hazard. Please refer to the attached aerial photo showing the location of the dock with respect to the shoreline and adjacent docks.

We also request consideration for a waiver from City of Austin Land Development Code Section 25-2-1176 (D) (2), which states "Approval of the Parks and Recreation Board is required for a structure, other than a retaining wall that has a width, measured parallel to the shoreline, greater than 20 percent of the shoreline width of the lot or parcel of land on which the structure is to be considered". The Boon easement on Lot 14 is approximately 60 feet wide measured parallel to the shoreline. The boat dock is 21.5 feet wide, or 35% of the easement width. The footprint and roofline of the reconstructed dock are the same as the original dock. According to the Owner, he and his contractor attempted to salvage as much of the structure from the old dock as possible. They intended to reuse the roof material but weather damage precluded that. They were, however, able to reuse some of the decking. The dock is similar in size as the adjacent docks and is of similar construction and appearance. The renovated boat dock should have no adverse effects on the natural and traditional character of the land and waterways as compared to the original installation.

We appreciate your consideration of this waiver request.

Respectfully,

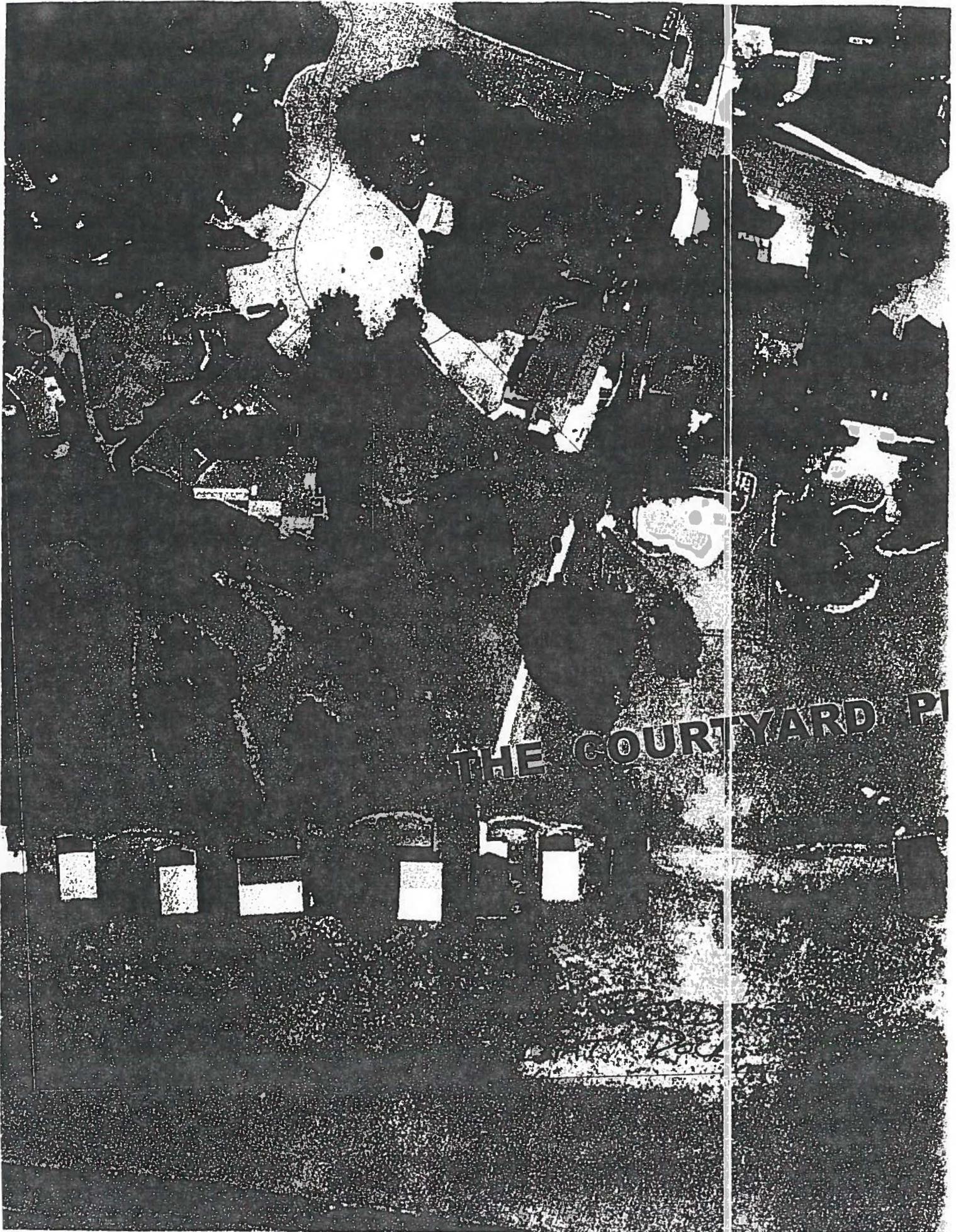


Kenneth C. Aicklen, P.E.  
BAKER-AICKLEN & ASSOCIATES, INC.

attachments



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#2

MEMORANDUM

To: Parks and Recreation Board

From: Jesus M. Olivares, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department

Date: March 11, 2003

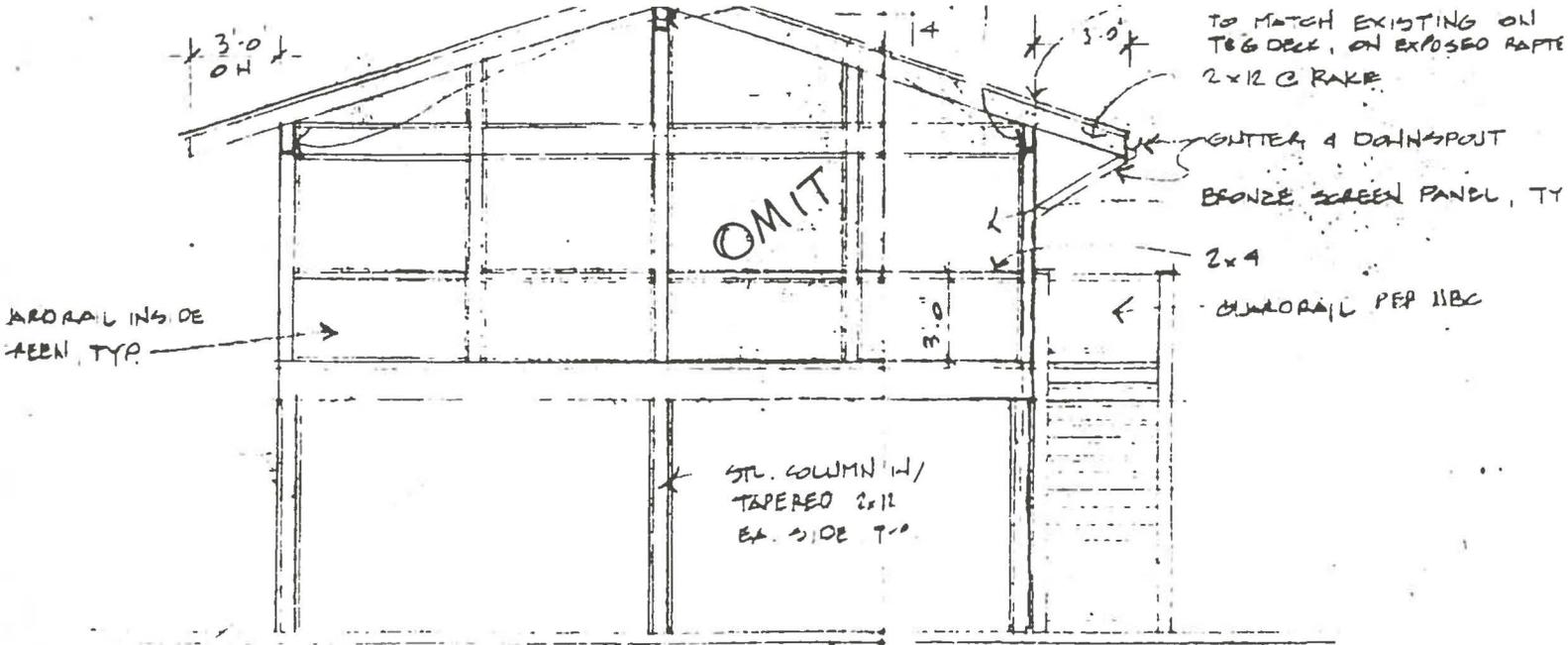
Subject: Construction of Yarbrough dock at 2105 Island Cove.  
File No. SP-00-2190DS (correction).

A request was received from Signor Enterprises on behalf of Steve and Linda Yarbrough in July 2000 to construct a boat dock at 2105 Island Cove. The Parks and Recreation Board approved the Site plan July 11, 2000. The dock that was constructed is not what was on the approved site plan. A site plan correction has been file with the WPDRD.

The Parks and Recreation Department (PARD) staff has reviewed plans for the proposed project and finds they do not meet the requirements of Article XIII, Section 25-2-1176, (Regulations for the Construction of Boat Docks) of the Land Development Code. The proposed dock extends 35' from the shoreline. A dock may not extend more than 30' from the shoreline unless the Parks and Recreation Board determines that the dock will not create a hazard and approves the construction of the dock. The Parks and Recreation Board shall make a recommendation on the distance a dock can extend without creating a hazard.

  
Jesus M. Olivares, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department

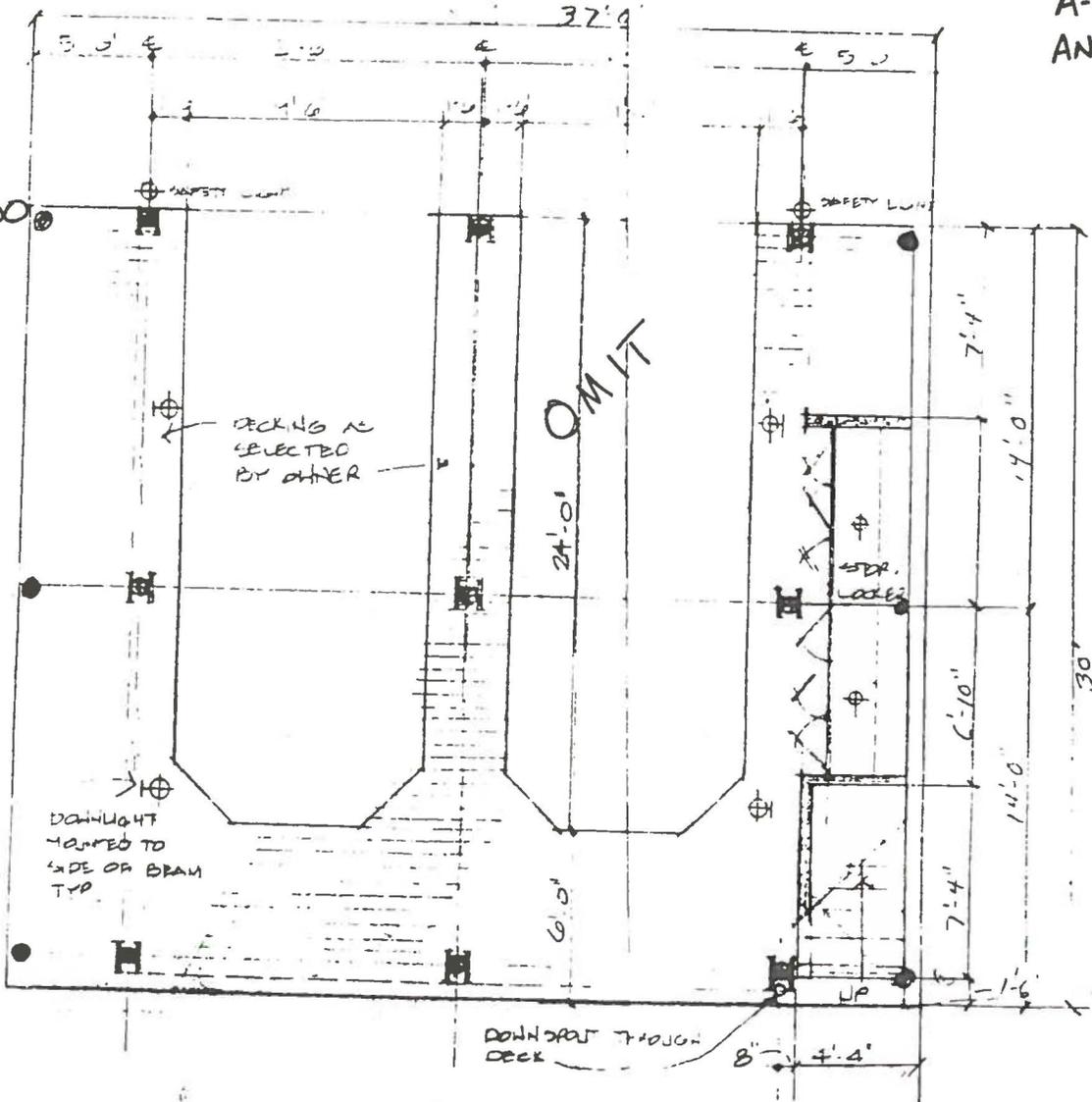
①



① SHORE SIDE (WEST) ELEVATION

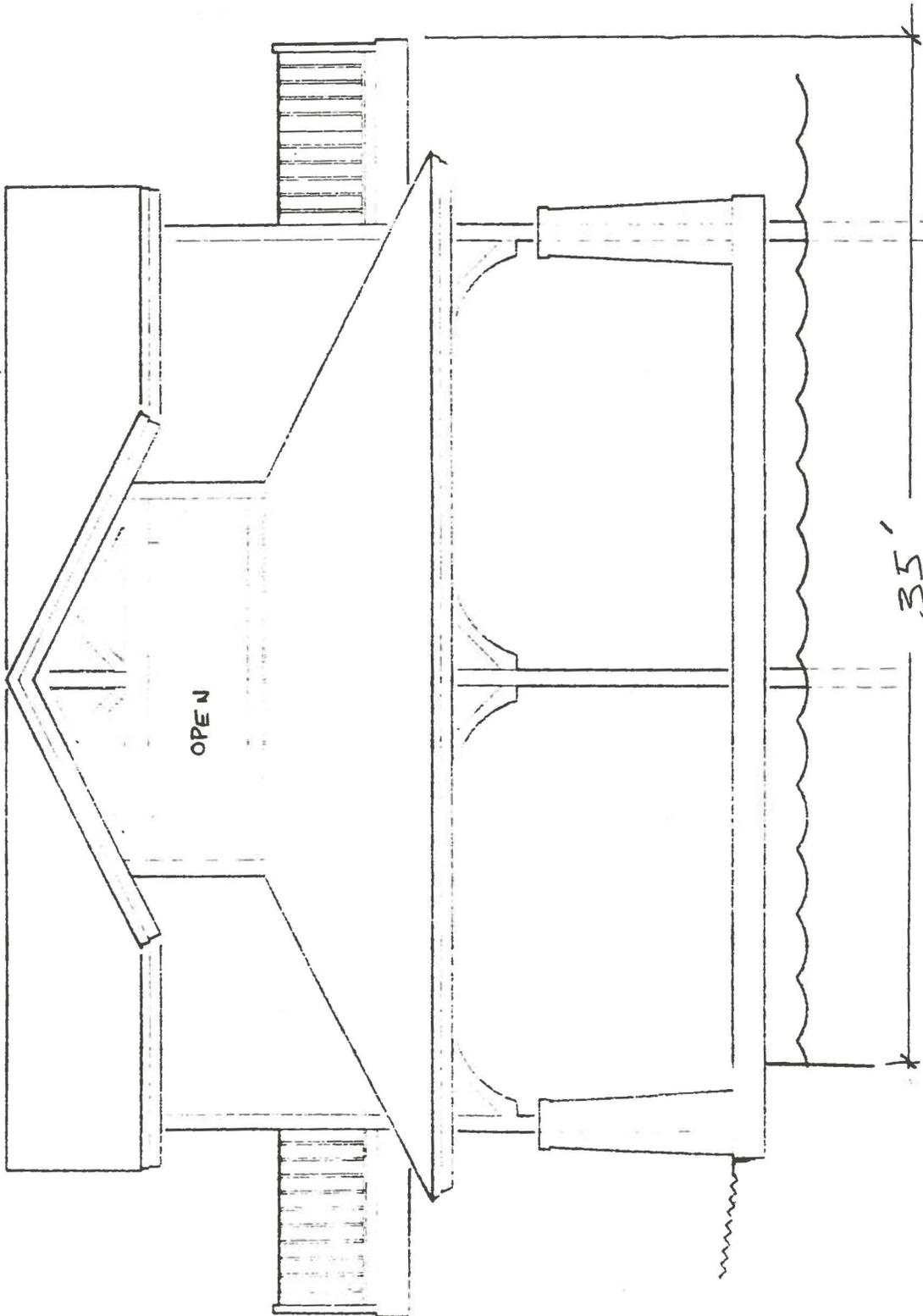
△ SEE SHEETS A-1 THRU A-3 AND S-1

APPROVED  
Dock  
July 11, 2000



② LOWER LEVEL PLAN  
~~Not to Scale~~

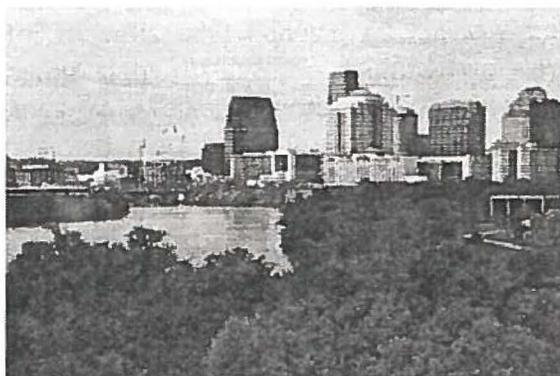
DOCK THAT WAS CONSTRUCTED.



1/4"-1'-0"

SIDE ELEVATION

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## Austin Parks and Recreation Department Calendar of Events

### MARCH 2003 \*75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrate Zilker Kite Festival Zilker Park

March 1-4	“Grease” 8pm	397-1463	Zilker Hillside Theater
March 2	Zilker Kite Festival	974-6700	Zilker Park
March 2	Cooking with Chicken	837-1215	Pioneer Farm
March 4	Photo Austin III 6-8pm	397-1455	DAC
March 8	Organic Plant Sale 9am-2pm	327-8181	Austin Nature Center
<b>March 9</b>	<b>Zilker Kite Festival</b>	<b>(Rescheduled)</b>	<b>Zilker Park</b>
March 9	Sewing-quilts&lace	837-1215	Pioneer Farm
March 10-14	Spring Break Camp	476-5662	Austin Rec Center
March 15-16	African Violet Show	327-8181	Austin Nature Center
March 16	“Boots and Spurs” Stories of the West	837-1215	Pioneer Farm
March 22-23	Orchid Show	327-8181	Austin Nature Center
March 23	Contra Barn Dancers 1-5pm	397-1463	Zilker Hillside Theater
March 23	Dairy Day-milking	837-1215	Pioneer Farm
March 29-30	Zilker Garden Festival	327-8181	Austin Nature Center
March 30	Gardening-spring planting	837-1215	Pioneer Farm

# 2003 YEAR PLANNER

FIRST QUARTER

JANUARY						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1 USA CAN	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20 USA	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

FEBRUARY						
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16	17 USA	18	19	20	21	22
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MARCH						
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30	31					

SECOND QUARTER

APRIL						
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27	28	29	30			

MAY						
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JUNE						
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THIRD QUARTER

JULY						
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AUGUST						
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SEPTEMBER						
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28	29	30				

FOURTH QUARTER

OCTOBER						
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			1	2	3	4
5	6 *	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 USA CAN	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

NOVEMBER						
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DECEMBER						
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14	15	16	17	18	19	20 *
21	22	23	24	25 USA CAN	26 CAN	27
28	29	30	31			

USA UNITED STATES NATIONAL/STATE HOLIDAYS  
CAN CANADIAN NATIONAL/PROVINCIAL HOLIDAYS

\* JEWISH HOLIDAYS  
The Jewish day begins and ends at sundown. Thus, all holidays begin at sundown of the day preceding the date shown.